current roads parallel many of the earliest roads of the State. Highway planning in Alabama has become more systematic with the creation of the Alabama Highway Department in 1911 and its subsequent development, as well as Federal involvement in road financing since 1916. Twentieth century Alabamians have contributed greatly to the current development of the State road system, but they still owe a debt to Andrew Jackson, the Gaines brothers, John Byler, Wyatt Cheatham, and other early road builders of Alabama.

FRONTIER AND ANTEBELLUM TRAVEL: LIFE IN ALABAMA A CENTURY AND HALF AGO

It is difficult for someone living in the contemporary world of automobiles, airplanes, guided missiles, space satellites, and interplanetary exploration to conceive of the primitive nature of Alabama society less than two centuries ago. Only in this primitive setting, however, can the frontier and antebellum transportation system and its institutions be understood and appreciated.

A century and a half ago Alabama was a frontier. The society in the age of our great-great grandfathers was a society in which a man's rifle and axe and a women's spinning wheel, cards and loom, and iron pot were the ingredients of easy living; when salt and coffee were luxuries, the former almost indispensable and the latter to be used only when special guests were in the household; when the home was no more than a small cabin of one or two rooms, sparsely furnished with crude furniture turned out by the chief manufacturer of most of the family's possessions - the master of the house; when the family's clothing was homemade and "Sunday clothes" were dyed homespuns; when a major road was "twelve feet wide and clear of stumps and roots" and a toll of $ .12 ½ cents had to be paid by horseback riders unless they took a "stole"

road around the toll-gate; when babies died from "croup," "infantile," "intemperance" and "teething" and had little more than an even chance of living until they had passed the critical second summer; when pole, brush and logs were used to fence out wild and "domestic" animals; when people died of "remittent," "intermittent" and "perpetual" fever as well as from "dropsy" and "consumption"; when there were almost as many sheep as cattle, and oxen instead of mules were used to plow; when taverns operated by some of the most respectable citizens was common, and towns often named for them, such as "Looney's Tavern"; when community work activities and religious assemblies were the main social events; when grandmother's "yarbs" were the chief medicines; when doctors and lawyers were educated by training under older members of the profession; when Indians roamed the woods looking for unwary settlers to scalp; when panthers, wildcats, and bears stalked the settlers' livestock, and rattlesnakes were over six feet long; when corn liquor was the chief beverage and was served at most group functions; when every girl had a public record as to the number of "cuts" she could card and spin in a day, which was an important consideration for prospective grooms; when gambling and fighting characterized most public meeting; when a road was a mere opening in the forest and the man-towed cart was a common vehicle of travel; when there were no public schools, no hospitals, few churches, few doctors, lawyers, or ministers, no dentists, and no hard surfaced roads. Visualize these and hundreds of other unusual customs, conditions, and unique notions and one may begin to approximate the society and the transportation problems of frontier Alabama.

Central to frontier society was the difficulty of travel. The modes of conveyance were primitive, stream crossing were major undertakings, stage travel was frightening, and the taverns were not normally of the "Gone With the Wind" variety. Some improvements came with the

"Turnpike Era" but this "good roads" movement of the antebellum era was soon overshadowed by the advance of the "iron horse." The last half of the nineteenth century is usually referred to as the "Dark Ages of the Public Roads."

The vehicles of travel varied with the times and the affluence and purposes of the traveler. Pack horses were commonly used over the Indian trails. Animal and man-drawn carts were the early wheeled vehicles on the initial roads (widened Indian trails). An often-repeated man-drawn cart story was of the one which passed through Augusta, Georgia, "bound for Chatahouchee, a man and his wife, his son and his wife with a cart but no horse. The man had a belt over his shoulders and he drew in the shafts - the son worked by traces tied to the end of the shafts and assisted his father to draw the cart; the son's wife rode in the cart, and the old woman was walking, carrying a rifle and driving a cow." One family traveled from South Carolina to Clarke County, Alabama, with all of their belonging in a hogshead barrel pulled by a pony. Shafts and trunions were placed on the barrel to enable it to roll over and over when pulled. The most common conveyance, however, was the wagon and the most picturesque wagon was the Conestoga or "covered" wagon (also called the "prairie schooner"). Besides its importance due to wide use, the Conestoga was responsible for our current practice of driving on the right side of the road instead of following the English tradition of driving on the left side of the road. The sliding board by which the teamster driver could drive the horses and operate the brake on the left side of the wagon; therefore, to get closer view of the road ahead, the teamster drove the wagon on the right side of the road. Soon other vehicles adopted the right side driving as it was easier to follow the ruts of the heavy Conestoga than to cross them. By the early 1800's the practice was established by state law.

FERRIES AND COVERED BRIDGES: CROSSING STREAMS IN THE FRONTIER AND ANTEBELLUM PERIOD

Alabama's water transportation advantages are well known since the Alabama, Tombigbee, Chattahoochee, and Tennessee River systems are widely used in reaping the economic harvest of the hinterland in Alabama today. To our forefathers this far-flung network of navigable waterways also expedited keelboat and steamboat travel. Keelboats could use practically all of the streams in frontier days, and steamboats could go as far north as Tuscaloosa on the Tombigbee-Warrior system; Columbus, Georgia, on the Chatthoochee; Wetumpka via the Alabama system; and Florence, Alabama, (from New Orleans) on the Mississippi River-Tennessee River system.

For overland traffic, however, the streams proved to be obstacles to overcome - for de Soto in 1540, William Bartram in 1775, and less distinguished travelers of later years. Methods of crossing streams varied with the traveler and the times, but ferries and covered bridges were luxuries that the earliest pathfinders did not have.

The earliest known non-Indian to record his experiences in crossing Alabama's waterways was Hernando de Soto. Streams too deep or swift to be ridden across or waded were crossed in at least three different way according to the chronicles of the expedition:
a row-of-horses method to traverse a narrow and shallow but swift stream; a crude rope-towed ferry for wider and deeper streams; and boats for the major streams.

The row-of-horses method was described by the Ranjel narrative of the expedition in Bourne's Narrative of the Career of Hernando de Soto. The procedure was used at fords and trail crossings where the water was not deeper than a man's head. It consisted of a row of

mounted horses, steadied by their riders and aligned head to tail across the stream. The foot soldiers would ford on the downstream side, taking advantage of the calmer water and handholds provided by the horse's tail, stirrup, breast-piece, or mane, and pass from horse to horse to the other side of the stream.

The rope-wowed "ferry" method was also described by Ranjel:

> they took the chains in which they were bringing the Indians, and with some 'S' of iron, fastened them together and made one chain of them all. They fastened one end of the chain to one bank and the other to another in order to take over the barge, and the current was so strong that the chain broke twice. Seeing this, they fastened many ropes together and made of them two, and they fastened one to the stern and the other to the bow and drawing the barge first one way and then the other, they got the people and the baggage across.

Wider and deeper streams were crossed by boat. The Ranjel and Biedma diaries of the expedition indicate at least three kinds of boats were used: a "piragua" or dug-out made from the hollowed out trunk of a well-seasoned fallen log; a crude raft made from cane and dried wood (a common device used for crossing streams by the early Indian traders); and a "barge" which was apparently constructed by cutting a dug-out into two pieces and inserting a flat bottom of planking to increase the breadth. Preparations for a major stream crossing sometimes required several days. Biedma recorded that one such crossing involved four dug-outs and consumed twenty-eight days.

As the Indian trails became more heavily traveled by traders a couple of hundred years later, local Indians often ferried the traders across the streams using their canoes or other water craft. Traders who frequented the same trails would often construct or buy a crude boat and hide it near the crossing for later use. As late as 1775, however, William Bartram, the famed botanist, and his Indian guides were required to construct a raft to cross a swollen Alabama stream

(identified by Peter Brannon as Pintlala Creek, a few miles south of the present site of Montgomery). Bartram described the event as follows:

Early in the evening we came to the banks of a large deep creek, a considerable branch of the Alabama; the waters ran furiously, being overcharged with the floods of rain which had fallen the day before. We discovered immediately that there was no possibility of crossing it by fording; its depth and rapidity would have swept our horses loads and all, instantly from our sight; my companion after consideration, said we must make a raft to ferry over our goods, which we immediately set about, after unloading our horses and turning them out to range. I undertook to collect dry canes, and my companion, dry timber or logs and vines to bind them together; having gathered the necessary materials, and laid them in order on the banks of the river, ready to work upon, we betook ourselves to repose, and early the next morning sat about building the raft.... In the first place we laid, parallel to each other, dry, sound trunks of trees, about nine feet in length, and eight or nine inches in diameter; which binding fast together with grape vines and withe, until we had formed the first floor, about twelve or fourteen feet in length, we then bound the dry canes in bundles, each near as thick as a man's body, with which we formed the upper stratum, lying them close to the side of each other and binding them fast: after this manner our raft was constructed. Then having two strong grape vines, each long enough to cross the river, we fastened one to each end of the raft; which now being completed, and loading on as much as it would safely carry. The Indian took one of the grape vines in his mouth, plunged into the river and swam over with it, and the vine fixed to the other end was committed to my charge, to steady the raft and haul it back again after being unloaded. As soon as he had safe landed and hauled taught his vine, I pushed off the raft, which he drew as quick as possible, I steadied it with my vine: in this manner, though with inexpressible danger of losing our effects, we ferried all safe over. The last load, with other articles, contained my property, with all clothes, which I stripped off, except my breeches, for they contained matters of more value and consequence than all the rest of my property put together; besides I did not choose to expose my self entirely naked to the alligators and serpents in crossing the flood. Now feeling all the goods safe over, and the horses at a landing place on the banks of the river about fifty yards above, I drove them all together, when, seeing them safe landed, I plunged in after them, and being a tolerable swimmer, soon reached the opposite shore.

For the majority of stream crossings, these elaborate procedures were not necessary. The trails generally crossed streams at fording places and, for narrow streams, a felled tree (called by Bartram a "raccoon bridge") would suffice. Indians and experienced frontiersmen had little problems in crossing "raccoon bridges." but this aptitude was not demonstrated by more genteel travelers. Bartram noted that in crossing such bridges "my Indian friend would trip as quick and

light (as a racoon), with one hundred weight of leather on his back, when I was scarcely able to shuffle myself over it astride."

Conveniently for Bartram and other travelers not conditioned for frontier life, trails were soon widened into wagon roads and non-fordable streams had ferries. Actually, de Soto's row of horses and Bartram's "steadying vine" operated on the same principle as the cabled ferry. The horses or vine served as a guide-wire along which the pulley cable rolled to guide the boat and to propel it with the aid of the current.

Early Alabama ferries included Sam Mims', Adam Hollinger's, and the Claiborne Ferry (north of St. Stephens) on the Alabama River; Colbert's Ferry, Dr. Henry Rhodes' Ferry, and the ferries at Fort Deposit and Ditto's Landing on the Tennessee River; Gray's Ferry at Red Warrior's Bluff; John Fowler's Ferry across Mobile Bay; Kennard's Ferry over the Chattahoochee at Columbus; Young's Ferry on the Tallapoosa (twenty miles below Horseshoe Bend); and Colonel Raoul's Ferry over the Tombigbee. In fact, as late as the 1930's (until the fifteen toll bridges were constructed in the "Patch Road" era) most major roads in Alabama had ferries over the main streams rather than bridges. Some of the more publicized old ferries were Sam Mims' Ferry, the Claiborne Ferry, Colbert's Ferry, Gray's Ferry, Fowler's Ferry, and Colonel Raoul's Ferry.

Sam Mims, whose residence became a "Fort" and the scene of a Creek Indian War battle in the summer of 1813, operated a ferry at the "Cut-off", a channel which connects the waters of the Alabama and the Tombigbee. He ferried passengers to Nannahubba Island, and Adam Hollinger took them from there to the west bank of the Tombigbee. Lorenzo and Peggy Dow, the Methodist circuit rider and his wife, crossed on Mims' Ferry on an unsuccessful mission to

convert the citizens of St. Stephens. They were to discover, as Alabama historian A.B. Moore stated, "The immigrants who settled...in the localities of Fort Stoddert and Fort St. Stephens generally were not of the stuff that angels are made."

The Claiborne Ferry was named for General Claiborne of the Mississippi Territory who took John Weatherford's planation during the Creek Indian War and renamed the location Fort Claiborne. The main branch of the Federal Road from the Okmulgee to the Tombigbee crossed at this strategic location, one of the many sites visited by General Lafayette in his 1825 sojourn to Alabama. The Claiborne Ferry had a long tenure; it was still functioning in 1929 when Peter Brannon was surveying Alabama ferries, bridges, roads, and other topics in his Montgomery Advertiser and Alabama Highways articles.

When the Scotch-Chikasaw half-breed, George Colbert, negotiated with General James Wilkinson the right to make a wagon road out of Natchez Trace, he reserved for himself the exclusive right to operate a ferry where the Trace crossed the Tennessee River. Colbert also obtained a house and a ferry boat built for him by the United States government. Charging a dollar for a horse and rider to cross his ferry (including Jackson's military expeditions to and from New Orleans), Colbert had one of the most profitable ferry operations in the State.

Parker Gray established a ferry on the Tallapoosa River at Red warrior's Bluff near old Fort Toulouse. Four miles below the Judkins' Ferry Bridge (of the 1929 era), gray's Ferry was subsequently called Hatchett's Ferry and (in 1926) Hughes' Ferry.

By an act of the Alabama legislature in December, 1822, John Fowler of Blakely was authorized to establish a ferry to run between Blakely and Mobile. A stage line ran through Blakeley later and used the ferry. Years later the Cochrane Bridge spanned Mobile Bay near the

same location.

The Napoleonic exiles of the "Vine and Olive" Colony in Marengo County (named for the famous European battle) also had a ferry on the Tombigbee three miles north of Demopolis, the "city of the people." It was operated by Colonel Nicholas Raoul, who had commanded Napoleon's advance guard on the march from Elba to Paris. Apparently Raoul shred General L'Allemand's sentiments that "I have more ambition than can be gratified by the colony on the Tombigbee" because he left his cabin on French Creek in 1824 to go to Mexico before later returning to France.

According to Alabama historian Charles G. Summersell, typical rates charged by early Alabama ferries were: man, 5 cents, horse, 5 cents, cattle, sheep, and hogs, 2 ½ cents each; wagon or carriage with four or more horses, 75 cents, ox carts with two oxen, 35 cents, and with more than two oxen, 60 cents. These rates were similar to bridge toll rates in the same period (for example, at the Judkins' Ferry Bridge on the Central Plank Road) and were more reasonable than the exorbitant one dollar per rider and horse charged by George Colbert.

Bridges gradually replaced ferries over the major streams and were the main methods of crossing the minor streams on the leading roads by the end of the antebellum era. The earliest bridges were normally covered bridges and, like turnpikes, they required each two words to pay a toll --a direct road use "tax." The Alabama legislature first authorized a bridge in 1821 to connect the two sides of the town of Cahaba across the Cahaba River. The second bridge authorized (1822) was at "the falls of the Warrior River" in Tuscaloosa. Later, toll bridge companies were authorized to build bridges across the Tennessee River at Florence and across the Cahaba at Centreville in Bibb County.

The lattice work-braced wooden structure known as "the covered bridge" was patented by Ithiel Towns of Connecticut. Prior to patenting the covered bridge, Towns had designed the capitol building of North Carolina and the original bridge over the James River at Richmond. Many Alabama bridges were later built following towns pattern.

A major builder of covered bridges in Alabama was John Godwin of Cheraw, South Carolina, and his carpenter and chief mechanic, Horace King. King was Godin's slave but was manumitted (freed by his owner's will) when Godwin died in 1859. Godwin's act was appreciated because, as a freed man, King prospered and subsequently materially aided the destitute Godwin family. King became a bridge builder in his own right, building covered bridges over the Chattahoochee at Columbus, Eufaula, and Fort Gaines. King also represented Russell County in the legislature for three terms during Reconstruction.

Confederate and Union troops burned a large number of covered bridges to obstruct the progress of the other side's forces during the Civil War. The ones which remained were, for the most part, eventually replaced by the "Queen truss" bridge - an open skeleton bridge with low banister sides, and an angle braced frame supported by upright steel rods. A rare form of this bridge was the "double decker" over the Tennessee River at Florence. Trains crossed on the top of the bridge, and vehicles on the second layer. With the "Automobile Revolution" came steel reinforced concrete spans (as the vibration caused by autos tended to shake loose the nuts and bolts of the "Queen truss" bridge).

Two other curiosities in Alabama bridge building were the wooden suspension bridge of Lowndes County inventor John R. Remington and the longest covered bridge in the United States, over the Tallapoosa River at Horseshoe Bend. Remington's bridge was a thin, inverted

arch bridge with glued joints, combining models of his novel bridge in both England and the United States, the style never caught on. His crowning achievement was the 436 foot bridge between Coosa Street and the Alabama River Wharf in Montgomery. This bridge, built at Remington's own expense, was used with caution by local citizens. The Horseshoe Bend Bridge in Alabama was the longest covered bridge in the United States for eight years - between the collapse of a longer bridge over the Delware River in 1955 and its collapse in 1963. Built by Joe Winn of Dadeville in 1907-1908 for $13, 986, the Horseshoe Bend Bridge was 600 feet long.

The preservation of the fewer than twenty covered bridges remaining in Alabama has been a major aim of Warner Floyd and the Alabama Historical Commission. The Commission has compiled a list of the Alabama covered bridges still intact. They are:

Blount County

Horton Mill Covered Bridge - Five miles north of Oneonta, off Alabama 75; built between 1934-35; two-span, Town-type bridge, 220 feet in length is 70 feet above the water and it is the highest bridge above water in the United States. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the bridge is owned by the Alabama Historical Commission and has been restored.

Old Easley Road Bridge - Three miles north of Oneonta; built between 1927-28, the one span, Town-type bridge is 95 feet long. Owned and maintained by the Blount County Commission.

Swann Bridge - Off Alabama 79 near Cleveland, built in 1934, the three-span, Town-type bridge is 324 feet long and one of the two longest bridges in the county. Owned and maintained by the Blount County Commission.

Nectar Bridge - Nectar Road, Cleveland; 1932; the two-span bridge is 385 feet long, the longest covered bridge in the South, and the seventh longest of its kind in the United States. Owned and

maintained by the Blount County Commission.

Calhoun County

Coldwater Bridge - Six miles southwest of Anniston and easily accessible and visible from I-20. The one-span, modified Kingpost truss bridge is 60 feet long. Coldwater has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Tallahatchee Bridge - North of Anniston, 2 ½ miles east of U.S. 431; c. 1900; Town-like lattice, 60 feet long, of rare Kingpost design. Owned and maintained by Calhoun County Commission.

Coosa County

Oakachoy Covered Bridge - Off Alabama 9 near Nixburg; one-span, 56 feet long, modified Queenspot bridge. Owned and maintained by the Coosa County Commission.

Cullman County

ClarksonBridge - On County Road 11 near Bethel; 1921; two-span Town bridge, 250 feet long. Owned and maintained by the Alabama Highway Department. The bridge has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Etowah County

Nocalulee Falls Bridge - Formerly the Duck Springs Bridge located ten miles north of Decatur but recently moved to Nocalulee Falls. It is a one-span bridge, 119 feet long, resembling the hull of a boat.

Lee County

Salem-Shotwell Bridge - Near Salem; the one-span, 75 feet long Town bridge has been fully restored by the Lee County Commission.

Sumter County

Alamuchee Bridge - On the campus of Livingston University, Livingston; built in 1861; the one-span, 88 feet long Town truss bridge has been restored by Sumter County.

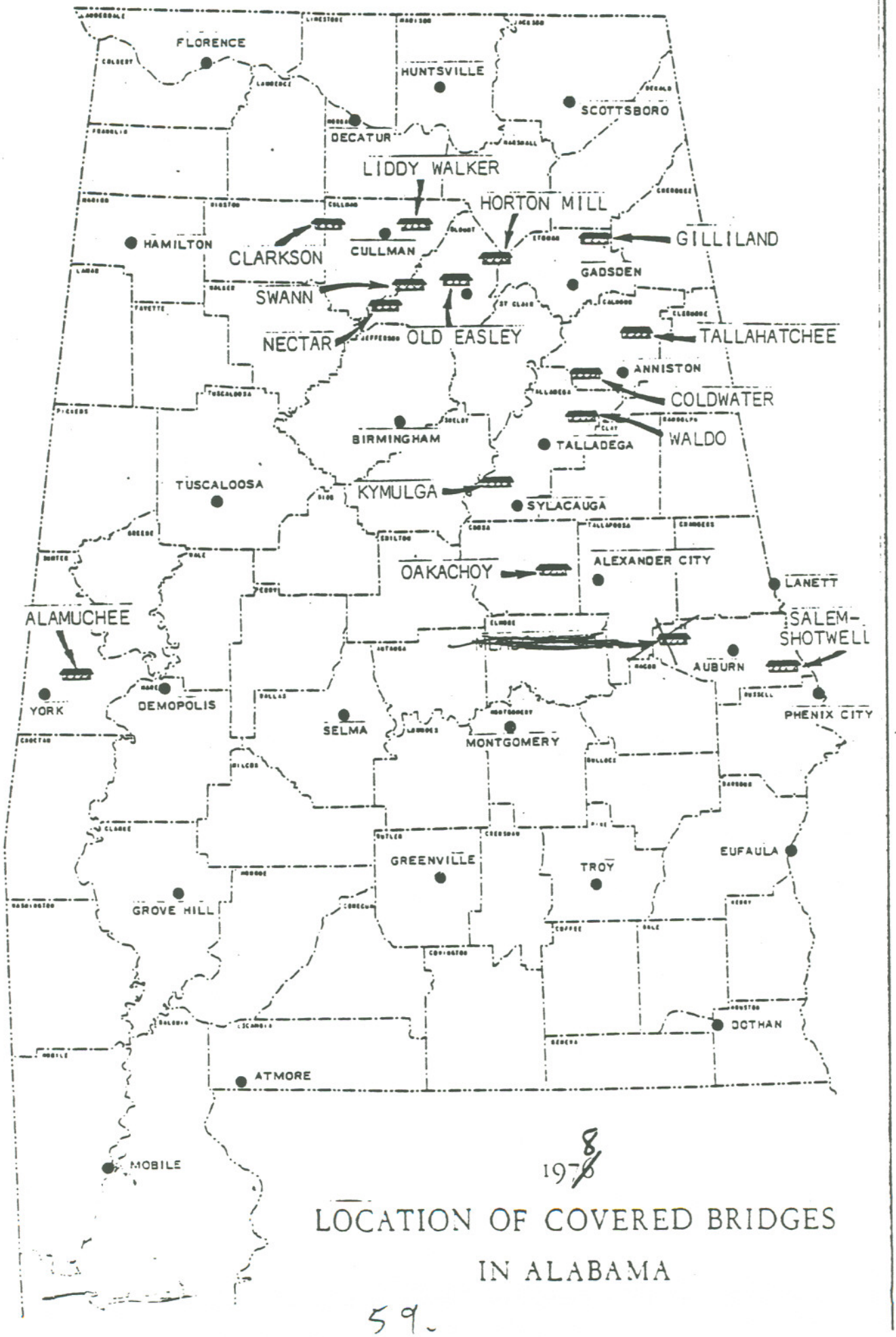
Talladega County

Waldo Covered Bridge - Four miles southwest of Talladega off Alabama 77; date of construction unknown, but may have been built as early as the turn of the century; one span, Town truss, 115 feet long. Partially restored; part of the Alabama Hocutt Park.

Kymulga Covered Bridge - Between Childersburg and Alpine on Laniers Road; two-span, Town-type bridge, 105 feet long is near one of Alabama's most prominent grist mills.

THE KEELBOATMEN AND ROAD BANDITS

Flatboats and keelboats hauled goods downriver, but before the days of the steamboat the overland and trail was the only practical route of return. The men whose exploits adorned the frontier roads and trails were a hard-living breed. Jonathan Daniels, in The Devils' Backbone, detailed many of exploits. Their great strength and unusual capacity for whiskey were ofttimes the subject of great debate during idle hours on the trail. The river boatmen were famed for their spirited braggadocio, such as that attributed to one of the famous Castlemans: "I fired, girdled an oak, nicked the epidermis of an Indian's back, knocked over a catamount, brought down a flock of turkeys from the tree-tops, laid out a buffalo, blazed a section of lands, split enough boards to cover a shanty, and if I had fired once more, you may say I wasted time and ammunition." The men called themselves half alligators and half horses, and often proclaimed their boldness in defiance of all within earshot. Mark Twain, in his Life on the Mississippi, recorded such a



1978

LOCATION OF COVERED BRIDGES IN ALABAMA

bellowing threats,

Look at me! I'm the man they call Sudden Death and General Desolation! Sired by a hurricane, dam'd by an earthquake, half-brother to the cholera, nearly related to the smallpox on the mother's side! Look at me! I take nineteen alligators and bar'l of whiskey for breakfast when I'm ailing. I split the everlasting rocks with my glance, and I quench the thunder when I speak! Whoo-oop! Stand back and give me room according to my strength! Blood's my natural drink, and the wails of the dying is music to my ear. Cast your eye on me, gentlemen! And lay low and hold your breath, for I'm about to turn myself lose!

Certainly many tales of the river man were imaginatively overdrawn, but some fantastic stories were true. A Virginian related in his diary this matter-of-fact account of crossing the rugged Tennessee River after inspecting some possible Mississippi investments:

Got to Colberts at the ferry about 8 o'clock; got 7 quarts of whiskey at ! Doll per quart and 4 dried fish at 6 pce apiece; Cross't the River; J. Green broke on of the bottles of whiskey went 3 or 4 miles; sto'pt; Sam'ls horse broke another bottle of whiskey; we then determined to drink the balance to save it; went about 10 miles to a good run of water; Bill lost his coat behind him.

Although each man often proclaimed himself to be the strongest and most courageous, people generally regarded Mike Fink, who had come to the Natchez Trace from Pennsylvania, as "King of the Keelboatman." The best shot on the river, Fink could shoot off a wild turkey's head at a distance of 100 yards while the bird was in full flight. He could drive a nail with a musket ball from forty feet, without bending the nail a bit.

Perhaps the alleged story of Fink's death best illustrates the way in which he lived. After a quarrel with a friend named Carpenter, Mike Fink was to be allowed, as a demonstration of good will, to put a bullet through a tin cup full of whiskey on the friend's head, William Tell fashion. He was the best shot on the river, and no one doubted his ability to shoot the cup. To the surprise and dismay of everyone, however, the bullet passed below the cup and apparently through Carpenter's skull. Fink simply remarked, "Why, Carpenter, you've split the whiskey."Before he

could say more, another friend of Carpenter killed Fink. A few minutes later, it was discovered that the accurate Mike Fink had shot between cup and skull to knock Carpenter out temporarily, but only with a crease through his scalp.

Bandits on the Frontier Roads

Second cousins of the keelboatment were the road bandits on the frontier. People traveling the frontier roads and trails often banded together to protect themselves from the notorious robbers and murderers, especially when traveling such bandit-infested roads as the Natchez Trace. Such groups often included boatmen returning upriver (the keelboatmen and flatboatmen), settlers, traders, speculators, and sometimes a European visitor traveling in the West for adventure or to gather material for a sensational "western" story.

Even taverns were not always refuges from the murders. One story recounts the proprietors of one inn who often robbed and murdered their prosperous guests. After several years away from home, the innkeeper's son returned for a visit, now a wealthy man. Confiding in a neighbor, he disguised himself, hoping to conceal his identity from his parents long enough to surprise them with knowledge of his own good fortune. He bragged of his wealth quite freely before retiring for the night at their inn. The innkeepers murdered him and buried the body, not knowing it was their son until the neighbor, explaining what their son had intended, asked how he was doing. Sure enough, when they later dug up the body, they found the birthmark on his breast that identified him as their son.

The history of bandits on one of the frontier roads, the Natchez Trace, has been outlined by Jonathan Daniels in The Devil's Backbone. One of the most notorious was Joseph Thompson Hare. He moved up the Trace from New Orleans, finding it easier to murder for money in the

backwoods than to pick pockets or roll drunks in the big city. He terrorized travelers on the Trace for several years, but was finally hanged in 1818 for a $16,900 holdup of a night mail coach.

Another Trace bandit - Samuel Mason - threatened settlers and travelers along the Trace until Governor Claiborne of Natchez offered a $2000 reward for him dead or alive. In October, 1803, James Mays and "John Setton" arrived in town with Mason's head, wrapped in blue clay to prevent decay. "Setton" was discovered to be Wiley Harpe, a former member of Mason's gang, and both he and Mays were hanged in "Gallows Field in old Greenville, Their hands were cut off and hung from poles on the Trace.

Wiley Harpe and his brother Micajah, "Little Harpe and Big Harpe," were well-known along the road for their unsurpassed cruelty. To dispose of the bodies of their victims, they ripped open their bellies, removed their entrails, and filled the cavities with stones before sinking them in swamps or streams. Once, as a joke, the Harpes tied one of their victims to a horse and whipped the animal with its screaming rider over a cliff. Even the other bandits would not tolerate their savagery, and they ran them out to fend for themselves. Big Harpe once tomahawked a companion because he snored to loud. Then, as he was leaving the cabin, he killed the woman and baby who lived there. A posse caught him as he was robbing another victim, and the man whose wife and child he had killed put a bullet through his spine. As he lay paralyzed, the man cut off his head off with a butcher knife. Big Harpe's head was nailed to a tree in northwest Kentucky, near Henderson, where the skull remained for years to remind travelers of the savagery of the Natchez Trace and other frontier roads.

TAVERNS, INNS, OR "STANDS"

The mythical "South" of serene white mansions, white gloved Southern gentleman, happy slaves, mint juleps, magnolia blossoms, and a festive plantation atmosphere was "Gone With The Wind" for most Alabamians "befo' the war." A more typical Alabama scene presented log cabins, swept yards, sweaty white workers engaged in subsistence agriculture, homemade furniture, clothes, and whiskey and "jus' plain folks."

In the same sense, the mythical "Hollywood" rural taverns at the end of a long tree-lined drive with a high pillared verandah seductively beckoning the weary travelers to give up their carriage for waiting mint juleps likewise "went with the wind" (if one can lose something one never had) before the Civil War. Again a more realistic picture would be less than enticing. A traveler through the Southern states in 1784 said of the inns and taverns: "three-fourths of them are in reality little better than mere shelters from the weather; yet the worst of them is by no means deficient in charging high." Another traveler in the South advised companions to take the steamboat rather than travel by roads due to the "wretchedness of the roads, and still worse conditions of the inns."

Anyone who has stopped at contemporary commercial establishments along the Interstate for gas, food, or tourist trappings (the sort of merchandise a person buys when "touring," or"wins" at fairs) has seen amusing "Tavern Rules" posters or plaques. Actual guidelines for the proper running of a tavern are rare. A "guideline for running a tavern" was constructed by an experienced traveler in 1783 for his daughter who was about to open an inn. As the rules were designed for "genteel company" and to discourage the patronage of the "rabble," one can imagine

the lack of luxuries in establishments without such high standards. The "old traveller's" rules were:

1. Let your house be kept neat. Have your furniture and rooms brushed and wiped every morning.
2. Keep scrapers at the outside doors, and mats at every door.
3. Let your bedsteads be cleansed every March, and you will be seldom troubled with multi pedes, if you should be, use quicksilver and tallow.
4. Have your cooking done free from coals and ashes: frequently let you ham and chicken be broiled instead of fried.
5. Travelers like strong coffee, and well settled: but they cannot endure smoky or greasy tea.
6. Let your water bucket stand so high that your children shall not dabble in it.
7. Keep a spit box in each room: this will teach vulgar persons that the floors were not made to spit on.
8. In a large establishment you may have two or three large rooms with several beds: but as a general thing, have small rooms and single.
9. Teach all around you to perform their duty in a silent manner; let each know the particular ring of the bell for him.
10. Let it be the business of one to receive strangers, and show them the common entrance room.
11. Don't allow your children to examine the baggage of your guests; not to belch up wind at the table.
12. If you are intent on keeping a still, genteel house, noisy, vulgar people will soon take the hint, and leave your worthy guests.
13. Furnish your public room with some good books, geographical and descriptive works, and papers for the reason.
14. If you clear expenses the first season, you should be satisfied; and I am certain, unless you have changed for the worse, since you left my roof, your winning manners will secure the return of old guests, and each will bring a new one for the next year.

If you follow the above directions and such suggestion, as will naturally arise in your inquisitive mind, your guests will always leave you with regret, and hasten to return to your well-managed establishment.

Unfortunately, most inns did not subscribe to these "high standards." A Georgia lodger related the following incident regarding the clean bed sheets he was so fortunate to have acquired.

(He) was awakened at five o'clock in the morning by someone violently knocking at his door. Jumping up he ran to the door, calling out, 'What is it? What on earth do you want disturbing one at such an unreasonable hour in the morning?' "Only want your sheets, sir.' 'My sheet! What on earth do you want them for?' To his astonishment the man replied, 'It is time to lay the table for

breakfast, and I want your sheets to put on the tables, because they are the cleanest!' The gentleman thought if the sheets were to take the place of tablecloths, he would prefer his own to any other person's, and therefore allowed the man to come in and take them. When he made his appearance at breakfast, he was disgusted, but could not help being at the same time amused, to see so many persons innocently breakfasting off the supposed table-cloth.

It may be possible that the most common traveler on Southern roads could no afford better accommodations, and the extra cost of preparing more adequate lodging would have "priced" the innkeepers out of business. Although inn prices were considered high, the bulk of the price was for food rather than lodging. When one considers that the bulk of the griping was directed to the lodging rather than the food, the following prices of a hotel at Huntsville in 1820 (and the disparities between the price of food and lodging) gives "food for thought."

Breakfast	37 ½c
Dinner	50c
Supper	37 ½c
Horse for the night	50c
Lodging	12 ½c
Boarding without lodging, per week	$3.50
Boarding with lodging, per week	$4.50
Horse, per week	$3.00

The griping "lodger" may have been accurate in his observations, but he may have been "getting what he paid for." Also, when one remembers the old cliche` about rocks and people in glass houses, he can ponder on a description of tavern eating from Everett Dick's The Dixie Frontier:

> When the dinner bell rang, there was a general rush into the dining-room, where the greatest haste and without a semblance of table etiquette or conversation the crowd bolted the food, licked their knives, and without excusing themselves retired to the barroom to smoke and spit tobacco juice.

The post-dinner activity in one Alabama tavern was aptly described by a genteel visitor: "The men leaned back in their seats, placed their feet against the sides of the fireplace at a point as high as

their heels, and amused themselves by spitting into the fire incessantly." Of course the genteel gripers were less crude, and the genteel were the ones who wrote most of the travel accounts.

In some tavern there were, for good or bad, a few civil amenities. At MacMillian's Tavern in South Alabama, for instance, the family held prayer each evening. However the visitor who observed this unusual tavern custom also observed that the stage driver who delivered him to this "place of worship" was undoubtedly the "most profane man known in the bounds of the State of Alabama."

The veteran chronicler of Alabama travel, Peter Brannon, alleged that more than one writer had proclaimed in east Alabama taverns, Lewis' Tavern at Fort Bainbridge in the "Wilds of the Indian Country" (Russell County) - the finest hotel in North America." Captain Lewis, the proprietor, was a former Army officer who had a chef "lately from the best hotel in the City of Washington." Perhaps Captain Lewis followed some of the "old traveler's" advice to his daughter on how to run a tavern. In any case, the stage graced his establishment by arriving around four o'clock in the afternoon and remaining until the next day.

The majority of the rural taverns (often referred to as "stands") were a day's journey apart since no one wished to travel "after dark." Sometimes nightfall would catch a traveler on the road, however, and he would have to take what shelter he could find. Normally he would board in a private home. This also had its perils as another group of travelers on a Southern road during the antebellum era was to discover. They stopped at a small cabin to seek lodging and later related the following experience:

> The woman who met them at the door refused for a time to take them in on the plea that her husband was absent and she was be content to take the fare she was able to give them, without putting her to extra trouble, provided they could find shelter for themselves and horses.

There was only one room to the house and the woman was compelled, therefore, to stretch a sheet across the corner of the room behind which she put down a pallet for the men. In the preparation of the supper she used but one cooking utensil, and that a frying-pan, for cooking the meat, then the bread and afterward the coffee. When they had eaten their supper and the gentlemen had smoked their pipes, the woman warmed some water in the frying-pan and asked the travelers if they wished to wash their feet before retiring; but they declining, she remarked that she could not rest well without bathing her feet, and became immediately to wash them in the pan to the great horror and disgust of the gentlemen. This revelation was quite unpleasant to them and the next morning they breakfasted only on roasted potatoes and water.

Perhaps the woman only wanted to reinforce her early objection to their spending the night. If not, this and similar habits may well explain the periodic deaths from "remittent," "intermittent," and "perpetual" fevers as well as "intemperance" and "teething" (as you can bet that babies would start "eating from the table" soon after this process was begun).

Of course some Southern taverns had better accommodations, and there were some "Tara Halls" and "Scarlet O'Haras," but the typical tavern, like the typical farming operation of the antebellum era, was not the stuff with which "Gone With The Wind" movies were made.

Early Alabama Taverns

Hotel (1810), in Huntsville (then Twickenham) on southwest corner of Square.

Old Green Bottom Inn (n.d.), in Normal, Alabama, four miles south of Huntsville.

Montgomery Tavern (n.d.), first in Montgomery, located on north side of Decatur Street, then Market Square.

Globe Tavern (n.d. - 1830), north side of Main Street. Initially known as "Indian Queen," changed to "Globe Tavern," or "At the Sign of the Globe."

Bonum House (1820), ten miles south of Montgomery.

Judge Burns' Tavern (1820), five miles from Blakely.

Cook's Tavern (1820-1836), Fort Bainbridge.

Cooker's Tavern (1820), located on road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Fort Dale Tavern (1820), Fort Dale.

House for Paying Guests (1820), Leighton.

Longmyre's Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

MacDavid's Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Duncan MacMillan's Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Mrs. Mills' Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Peeble's tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Planters' Hotel (1820), Huntsville.

Price's Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Mayor Taylor's Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Colonel Wood's Tavern (1820), road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Owchee Bridge Tavern (1820-1824), located on road between Mobile and Fort Mitchell.

Cahawba House (1821), corner of Vine and Arch Streets in Cahawba.

Campbell and Humphreys' Boarding House (1821), in Cahawba.

Cox's Hotel (1821), in Cahawba.

Thomas Ewing's Boarding House (1821), located at First North Street in Cahawba.

Mansion House (1821-1859), in Montgomery, later succeeded by Exchange Hotel.

Planters' Hotel (1821), Second North and Mulberry Streets in Cahawba.

Globe Hotel (1822-1823), in Mobile.

U.S. Hotel (1822-1825), in Mobile.

Green House (1823), on Royal Street in Mobile.

Gum Springs Tavern (1823), near St. Stephens.

Line Creek Tavern (1821-1859), in Montgomery, later succeeded by Exchange Hotel.

Planters' Hotel (1821), Second North and Mulberry Streets in Cahawba.

Globe Hotel (1822-1823), in Mobile.

U.S. Hotel (1822-1825), in Mobile.

Green House (1823), on Royal Street in Mobile.

Gums Springs Tavern (1823), near St. Stephens.

Line Creek Tavern (1824-1840), on the banks of Line Creek.

Col. Clement Freeney's House of Entertainment or Traveller's Rest (1825-1826), in Mount Pleasant, on road from Montgomery to Line Creek.

Marble Stone's House of Private Entertainment (1825), Court Street in Montgomery.

Montgomery Hotel (1825-1830), in Montgomery, later known as Bell Tavern, then Lafayette Tavern.

Farmers' and Planters' Hotel (1826), Montgomery.

John Law's Inn (1826), Monticello in Pike County.

Eagle Hotel (1827), Tuscaloosa.

Alabama Hotel (1828-1829), Mobile.

City Hotel (1828), corner of Broad and Market Streets in Tuscaloosa.

Eagle Hotel (1828), Greensborough in Greene County.
Lafayette Hotel (1828), Greensborough in Greene County.

Montgomery Inn (1828), Montgomery.

Robertson's Tavern (1828), twenty-seven miles east of Montgomery.

Mrs. Brown's Public Boarding House (1829), Mobile.

City Hotel (1829), Mobile.

Crowell's Tavern (1830), road from Mobile to Fort Mitchell.

Eagle Hotel (1830), Greenville in Butler County.

Royston's Inn (1830), road from Mobile to Fort Mitchell.

Captain Walker's Tavern (1830), Pole Cat Springs.

Kahaba Inn (1831), Cahawba.

Passamagoula Tavern (1831), Passamagoula.

Planters' Hotel (1831), Montgomery.

Union Hotel (1831-1832), Montgomery on Commerce Street between the Public Square and the Steamboat landing, opposite the Post Office.

Creek Stand Inn (1832), Creek Stand in the Creek Nation, on the road from Columbus, Georgia to Montgomery, 38 miles from Montgomery.

Eagle and Phoenix Hotel (1832), Montgomery, situated on site of the old City Hotel on Broad Street.

Washington Hall (1832), Tuscaloosa, corner of Broad and Market Streets.

Hotel (1835), Mobile.

Macgirt's Tavern (1835), road from Mobile to Fort Stephens.

Walton's House of Entertainment (1835), road from Mobile to Fort Stephens.

Tavern (1836), Tuskegee.

Battle House (1853-1855), Mobile.

STAGECOACHES, MAIL ROUTES, AND THE "HORSE EXPRESS"

The frontier and antebellum stagecoach driver was described by some as a cocky, cursing individual while others saw him as an obliging, accommodating, lighthearted, jovial type. This

"grand figure, a hero to all the boys and girls" was the radio and newspaper of his time. Whether he was Tom Green on the Byler Road run between Moulton and Tuscaloosa or James J. Lovelace on the stageling from Columbus, Georgia, to Fort Gaines or the driver to New Albany, Mississippi, described below by Everett Dick in The Dixie Frontier, he was a central folk figure of the Alabama frontier.

> (He had) four lines in his left hand and his whip with a twelve-foot lash in his right. He came every other day at noon. As the blast of his musical trumpet sounded at some distance, the 'hands' would be seen coming from every direction to the little post office in a corner of the general store. Large numbers of others had gathered. With this inspiring surrounding of spectators, the driver-actor was at his best. Some fifty yards before reaching the post office, with a flourish of the whip, he began his triumphal entry and, dashing up, suddenly drew on the reins, put on the brakes, locked the hind wheels, and the huge vehicle slid in to a stop.

The folk hero's vehicle was the stagecoach, so named because a change of horses was required at periodic intervals; thus trips were made in stages. The distance traveled by one team of horses was a "stage." Frontier stagecoaches were considerably different from the ones now observed in western movies. Early stages had four benches (similar to country church benches) and passengers loaded from the front as they would in a railway coach. The passengers on the back bench had to crawl over the other three benches. A later improvement was the Concord coach made in Concord, New Hampshire. The Concord coach had three benches with the passengers on the front and rear benches facing inward (as in the familiar "shoot-em-up" movie stagecoach) using the front and back of the vehicle as back supports. The middle bench was the most uncomfortable but it did have a broad strap as a back support.

The coach generally made long distances, but the horses were changed (relaxed) about every sixteen miles. On the Federal Road some of the stage stops were Fort Mitchell, Montgomery, Greenville, and Blakely. As the stages often carried the mail, the stage stops were

normally post offices as well, and a person looked for and met the stage in the same general manner as one awaits the mail man in rural and suburban areas today.

Mail Routes, 1817-1845
Compiled from the U.S. Statutes at Large
by Marie Bankhead Owen in Story of Alabama (New York, 1949).

In the Alabama Territory (1818) - From Fort Claiborne to Blakely via Fort Montgomery.

From Hunstville to St. Stephens via Milton's Bluff, Falls of Black Warrior, and French Settlement on Black Warrior.

From Fort Mitchell to St. Stephens via Fort Bainbridge, Fort Jackson, Burnt Corn Springs, Fort Claiborne, and the town of Jackson.

From Fort Jackson to the Falls of Black Warrior via Cahaba Valley.

From St. Stephens to Ford on the Pearl River in Mississippi via Winchester.

In the Alabama Territory (1819) - From Huntsville to Mooresville in Limestone County.

From Burnt Corn Springs to Fort Crawford via Conecuh Courthouse.

From Huntsville to Washington, Tennessee via Jackson Courthouse, Lawrie's Ferry, and Ross's.

From Hartford, Georgia to Sparta via Early Courthouse, Attawa's store in Henry County, Pike Courthouse, and Covington Courthouse.

In Alabama (1825) - From the Dale to Marengo.

From Greenville to Montezuma.

From Montgomery to Coosada.

From Bellefonte in Jackson County to Blountsville via Gunter's Landing.

From Athens to Florence via Eastport.

In Alabama (1827) - From Claiborne to Fort Stoddart via Rocky Mount and Hawell's

Ferry.

From Triana to Russellville via Moulton.

From Spring Place to Ridge's Ferry.

From Moulton to Tuscaloosa via Walker Courthouse.

From Ashville to Montevallo via Coosa Valley by Kelley's Creek, Harperville, and Hugh's store.

From Courtland to Leighton.

In Alabama (1828) - From Gunter's Landing to Blountsville.

From Marengo Courthouse to Claiborne.

From Daleville to Greenville via Clanton.

In Alabama (1832) - From Bellefonte to Elkton in Giles County, Tennessee via Larkinsville, Larkin's fork of Paint Rock River, Newmarket, Hazlegreen, and Athens.

From Montgomery to Webbville, Florida via Monticello, Williamstown, Franklin, Lemon's store, Columbia, and Woodville.

From Burnt Corn to Covington Courthouse via Belleville, Sparta, and Brooklyn.

From Ashville to Elyton via Allen's mills, Thomason's, and the Big Spring.

From Tuscaloosa to Springfield.

From Greenville to Franklin via Montezuma, Pearman's Ferry, Dale Courthouse, the Blockhouse, and Joel T. McLindon's.

From Montgomery to Cahaba via Hayneville.

From Montgomery to Elyton via Montevallo.

From Florence to Pulaski, Tennessee via Lexington.

From Daletown to Greensboro.

From Burnt Corn to Natchez, Mississippi via Claiborne, Clarkesville, Coffeeville,

Washington Courthouse, Winchester, Ellisville, Williamsville, Monticello, and Meadville.

From Monticello to Port Gibson.

From Newman, Georgia to Harpersville.

From Mooresville to Pulaski, Tennessee via Fulton, Athens, Redus' Mill, Jones' Ferry, Prather's Store, and Smithville.

From Gaines' post office in Pike County to Greenville via Wrightsborough.

From Montgomery to Ashville via William Townsend's and Chestnut Creek.

From Larkinsville to Woodville.

From Lowndes to Vernon.

From Demopolis to Greensborough via Arcola.

From Cahaba to Linden via Woodville.

From Monticello to Montezuma via Gainer's store.

In Alabama (1836) - From Columbiana to Sylacauga via Mineral Springs.

From Jacksonville to Benneettsville.

From Tuscaloosa to Pleasant Ridge via Romulus and Mosely and Cook's store.

From Livingston to Washington Courthouse via Mount Sterling, McCarty's, and Carrollton.

From Mesopotamia to Livingston via Daniel's prairie and Jones's Bluff.

From Burnt Corn to Allentown via Godbold's old store.

From Linden to Livingston via Flat settlement, Moscow, and Perryman's store.

From Livingston to Marion, Mississippi.

From Manningham to Washington via Mount Willing and Hayneville.

From Dallas, Tennessee to Bennettsville via Lookout and Wills valleys, Reason, and Rollins.

From Monticello to Tuskegee.

From Calhoun, Tennessee to Jacksonville via Walker's place, McDaniel's, Richard Taylor's Walker courthouse, George, William Henry's Charles Price's, Dougherty's mills, Chatooga (or Gaylesville), Smith's ferry, Francis Adams', and Rawden's store.

From Knoxville to Narketa, Mississippi via Gainesville.

From Fort Mitchell to Fort Gaines, Georgia via Roanoke, Georgia, and Irwinton.

From Uniontown to Daleville.

From Monticello to Daleville.

From Rockford to Lafayette via Montreal.

From Irwinton to Mt. Meigs via Clayton and Midway.

From Mount Willing to Benton via Maule's store.

From Montgomery to Gaines' store.

From Mt. Meigs to Hayneville via Carter's store.

From La Grange, Georgia to Talladega via Dickson's mills and Randolph courthouse.

From Hayneville to Gaines' store via Hickory Grove.

From Vernon, Georgia to Lafayette via Hurst's store.

From Jacksonville to Columbus, Georgia via White Plains, Boiling Springs, Randolph courthouse, Lafayette, Coosada, and Girard.

From Talladega courthouse to Lafayette.

From West Point, Georgia to Wetumpka via Coosada and Tallassee.

From Tuskegee to Tallassee via Tuckabatchee.

From Greensboro to Candy's landing on the Black Warrior River.

From Washington to Marion via Kingston, Independence, Hamilton, Oakbridge, and Valley Creek.

From Rockford to Maplesville via Chestnut Creek.

From Greenville to Pensacola, Florida via Robb's store and Sparta.

From Dale courthouse to Valambrosa, Florida.

From Tallahassee to Line Creek via Tuckabatchee.

From Bellefonte to Jacksonville via DeKalb courthouse and Cherokee courthouse.

From Lafayette to Ashville via Randolph courthouse, Sawyer's ferry, White Plains, Jacksonville, Walker's ferry, Double Springs, and Bennettsville.

From Greenville to Hayneville via Fort Dale.

From Tuscaloosa to Fairfield.

From Mt. Meigs to Irwinton.

From Pickenville to Winston courthouse in Mississippi via Macon and Louisville.

From Portland to Uniontown via Athens.

From Manningham to Mount Willing.

From Newmarket to Hazlegreen via Madison Springs.

From Rockford to Mardisville.

From Columbus, Georgia to Huntsville via Chambers courthouse, Randolph courthouse, and Benton courthouse.

From Salina to Greenville via Cahaba, Pleasant Hill, and Bragg's store.

From Jacksonville to Rome, Georgia.

From Cahaba to Centreville via Marion.

In Alabama (1838) - From Columbus, Georgia to Tallapoosa courthouse via Mount Ararat, Salem, and Coleman's.

From Spring Hill to McKinley via Boston, Dayton, and Whitehall.

From Cussetta to Tuskegee via Mount Jefferson and Auburn.

From Benton to Selma.

From Suggsville to Mount Pleasant via Gainestown.

From Montreal to Carrollton via Wedowee.

From Talladega to Ashville via Abney's ferry.

From Jacksonville to Ashville via Alexandria.

From Jacksonville to Carrollton, Georgia via White Plains, Lackey's store, Cane Creek, and Pond's.

From Salem to Scraper via Larkin's fork, Trenton, Larkinsville, Dumas settlement, Upper and Lower Peach Tree and Packer's settlement.

From Rome, Georgia to Decatur via Gaylesville, Lynchburg, Warrenton, White Sulphur Springs, and Somerville.

From Pineville to Quitman, Mississippi via Tuscahoma and Mount Sterling.

From Florence to Buzzard Roost.

From Marion, Mississippi to Gaston via Alamucha.

From Blountsville to Ashville.

From Demopolis to Pickensville via Longdon's store, Daniel's prairie, and Clinton.

From Fayette courthouse to Columbus, Mississippi via Millport.

From Walker courthouse to Blount's Springs via Chilton's mills, R.J. Murphree's, and R. Cameron's.

From Russellville to Itawamba courthouse by Heshbon.

From Winchester to Loving's via Crow Creek, Coon Creek, and Bolivar.

From Hickory Level to Franklin, Georgia via Adrian's ferry, Abacoochee Gold mines, and Canal Gold mines.

From Fayette, Georgia to Jacksonville via Hopkinsville, Chatooga Valley, and Jeffersonville.

From Somerville to Bennettsville via Cotoco Creeek and Brooksville.

From Clayton to Salem via Fagan's store and Crockettsville.

From Rockford to the Georgia store in Tallapoosa County via Socapatoy.

From Columbus, Georgia to Feagan's store via Fort Mitchell, the Natural Bridge, Sand Fort, Uchee post office, and Fort Bainbridge.

From Irwinton to Stockton.

From Wetumpka to Talladega via Nixburg, Socapatoy, and Hatchet Creek.

From Columbus, Georgia to Irvington via Glennville.

From Springfield to Columbus, Mississippi via Benevola, Bonner's Mills, Carrollton, Yorkville.

From Bellefonte to Paris via Langston and DeKalb Courthouse.

In Alabama (1842) - From Ashville to Jefferson via Holloway's from Lebanon to Holloway's Bridge.

From Louisville to Bellefonte via Trenton, Larkinsville, and Barryville.

From Thorn Hill to Cotton Gin Port, Mississippi via William Johnson's Pikeville, and Millville.

From Pikeville to Fulton, Mississippi.

From Russellville to Jacinto, Mississippi.

From Mobile to Carthage via Jackson, Grove Hill, Mott's post office, Woodwardsville, Shiloh, Linden, Demopolis, and Erie.

From Milford to Montezuma via Merrill's store.

From Hope to Macon, Mississippi via Fairfield.

From Gainesville to Macon, Mississippi.

From Irwinton to Chubbahatchee via Midway and William Dick's.

From Gainesville to Jackson, Mississippi via DeKalb.

From Black's Bluff to Tuscahoma.

From Columbia to Marianna, Florida via Woodville, Neel's Landing , Florida, and Cedar Bluff.

From Centreport to Greenville.

From Barboursville to Nanafalia via Beaver Creek and Dixon's Mills.

From Bellefonte to Louisville via Larkinsville and Trenton.

From Montgomery to Dale courthouse via Troy, Dixon, and Scroggin's mill.

From Suggsville to Mount Pleasant.

From Cahaba to Marion via Harrell's cross roads.

From Marion to Prairieville via Union Tavern.

From Tuskegee to Troy via Valerda Union Springs, and Aberfoil.

In Alabama (1842) - From Rome, Georgia to Jacinto, Mississippi via Warrenton, Decatur, and Tuscumbia.

In Alabama (1845) - From Jacksonville to Rabbittown, Carmichael's Pound's, Kemp's Creek, Defries's, Boiling Spring, and back to Jacksonville.

From Tuscaloosa to Somerville via Jasper.

From Summerville, Georgia to Jefferson via Chatoogaville and Gaylesville.

From Tuscaloosa to Columbus, Mississippi.

From McDonald to Franklin, Georgia.

From Tuskegee to Troy.

From Mount Pleasant to Suggsville.

From Barboursville to Nanafalia via Bear Creek, Shiloh, and Dixon's Mills.

From Centreport to Greenville.

From Nanafalia to Marion, Mississippi via Tompkinsville.

From Bolivar to Winchester, Tennessee.

From Greensboro to Livinston via Wither's Landing and Buzzard's Roost.

From Tuskeegee to Eufaula via Warriors Stand, Steam Mill, and Enon.

From Eufaula to Geneva via Abbeville, Columbia, Woodville, and Daleville.

From Woodville to Bainbridge, Georgia.

From Wetumpka to Talladega Springs.

From Clinton to Louisville, Mississippi via Warsaw, Cooksville, Macon, and Mashulaville.

From Alexandria to Ashville via Cane Creek Iron Works, and Ten Islands.

From Elyton to Rome, Georgia via Ashville.

From Tuscaloosa to Russellville via Fayetteville and Hughs' Mill.

Many distinguished visitors to Alabama passed over these post roads. Some of the better known travelers in the 1825-1850 era were: the Marquis de Lafayette, 1825; Count Saxe Weimer-Eisnach, 1826; Capt. Basil Hall of the Royal Navy, 1832; The Siamese Twins, 1834; President Martin Van Buren, 1842; Henry Clay, 1844; Tom Thumb and P. T.Barnum, 1847; and James . Polk, 1849.

An unusual local dignitary who rode the stage to sessions of Congress was the 490 pound Alabama Congressman Dixon Hall Lewis. Lewis "booked" the entire stagecoach in advance for his trips and was the only passenger. He also occupied two seats in Congress (but only got one

vote).

Major stagecoach owners in early Alabama were Major James W. Johnston, Lewis Calfrey, Robert Jemison, John R. Powell, and Wade Hampton Allen. Johnston and Calfrey (apparently at one time the proprietors of an inn at For Mitchell), aided by a mail contract with The United States government, established the first stage route east form Montgomery in 1821. The mail route and stage line ran to Milledgeville, Georgia. They initially ran a single coach once a week but, in 1822, the stage ran twice a week and , in 1827, service was extended to three trips a week. The stage left Montgomery on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings at four o'clock and arrived in Milledgeville early on the following mornings (Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday respectively). Johnston and Calfrey later established a stage line to Mobile - in partnership with Major Taylor of Greenville and Peter Byrne, an inn-keeper at Blakely. Robert Jemison of Tuscaloosa and John R. Powell of Wetumpka and Montgomery were vigorous competitors and almost broke one another until they combined their stage companies into a virtual monopoly of the stagecoach business in Alabama. Jemison and Powell promoted the development of Birmingham and the mineral district of Alabama. Wade Allen was a planter, steamboat owner, and owner of stage lines between Montgomery and Mobile.

Stagecoach rates apparently were subject to considerable variations. A Colonel Corcoran traveled form Columbus, Georgia, to Eufaula in 1845 for a fare of five dollars and an extra charge of five dollars for a 200 pound box of books. The charge for a stage ride from Elyton (Birmingham later) to the "Watering Place" resort at Blount Springs in 1854 was four dollars. Although the rate seems high there was a great demand on the Elyton-Blount springs run, and , in the summer months, there were three trips made each week. Peter Brannon surveyed a

stagecoach ledger for the 1842-1844 years and was amazed at the disparities in rates. He especially noted the record of a black passenger who paid three dollars for a passage from Irwinton to Fort Gaines when, at the same time, a 100 pound box was transported all the way from Columbus to Irwinton for forty-five cents. Apparently freight rate discrimination did not start with railroads in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Perhaps the rates reflected the hazards of travel - the degree of Indian and bandit danger or the condition of the roads, as well as distance and "what the traffic would bear.' In the 1830's a number of stage holdups in southeast Alabama were attributed to bands of roving Indians. The stage from Tuskegee to Columbus was held up several times and burned twice. Two stage travelers were killed near Marvin in 1836, and the stage south of Columbus to Eufaula ceased operations after Major William Flornoy was ambushed and killed on Wiwalaste Creek, south of old Cilula, in Russell County. A more common hazard, however, was the wretched condition of many roads, particularly in bad weather.

Road conditions in frontier Alabama were considered among the worst in the United States. Preparing for a trip from Alabama to Virginia in 1836, James Davidson recorded in his diary:

> But I am now to venture upon the perils of stage traveling - cracked skulls - broken bones - dislocated shoulders ... loss of sleep - hard jolts - rough fare - upset stages - mud - wind and cold are to be my portion for the next ten days.

The frequency with which stages got hung up on stumps in or near roads gave rise to the expression, "I'm stumped," meaning "I'm perplexed." To avoid being "stumped" passengers were often asked to rock the stage by shifting their bodies one way or the other. On rough terrain

and in wet weather, they would often be asked to walk either to lighten the load or to avoid injury if the stage overturned. In 1834 Tyrone Power took a trip from Georgia to Montgomery in which, for the last stretch of the journey (from midnight to day-light) he was forced to walk the bulk of the time. On a couple of occasions the driver refused to proceed unless the one woman passenger also got out of the stagecoach and waded the knee-deep mud. They arrived at Montgomery at 6 a.m. after completing a trip of 90 miles in thirty-two hours. Nevertheless, an 1832 traveler may have slightly exaggerated the hazards of the Federal Road when he advised:

> A traveller intending to proceed thence (from Augusta) by land to New Orleans is earnestly recommended to bid adieu to all comforts on leaving Augusta, and make the necessary preparations for a hard and rough campaign. If he has a wife and children unprovided for, and to whom he has not the means of leaving a suitable legacy, let him by all means be careful to insure his life to the highest amount the office will take; for the chances of perishing on the road are at the rate of ten to one.

A stage passenger over the same route the same year agreed with this negative outlook, however, and bemoaned the fact that he had earlier unjustly defamed Virginia roads. The Virginia traveling was very pleasant:

> When compared with the inconveniences, not to say sufferings, to which a traveller is exposed, when hazarding his person in the woods of Georgia and Alabama. I had hitherto Virginia and both Carolinas; these were now English turnpike-roads, when compared with those I had actually to traverse. I had also complained of the indifference of the stages in the same State: in Alabama I should have deemed myself happy, could I but have go sight of a Virginia stage, instead of the skeleton vehicles which were presented to my view. Too often had I heaped animadversions on the Virginia drivers: in Alabama again, I should have conferred on them the title of real gentlemen. I should have conferred far as to speak in derision and with contempt of the tough,

> split, and broiled fowls, with which a traveller is regaled at every meal in Virginia, and which are alive five minutes before they are put on the table for consumption: in Alabama, where bacon and sweet potatoes constitute the only delicacies, one of the feathered tribe would have been con- considered superior to the best Parisian pate` aux truffles.

"Express Mail," "Horse Express," and the "Pony Express"

The 1860 Pony Express from Missouri to California is a historical phenomenon of legendary proportions, but, unknown to most historians, a pony express or "horse express" through Alabama preceded the well-known mail riders by a quarter of a century. Everett Dick noted in The Dixie Frontier that an "express mail" was established between New York and New Orleans "about 1840." Letters, news clippings, price notations on goods, and other items which were thought by the sender to merit the extra mailing costs traveled by this method. Five hundred horses were used with a relay station every four miles. According to Dick, each rider "rode twenty-four miles, twelve each way." He galloped the entire distance and made a speed of fifteen miles per hour, including all stops.

The "express mail" to which Dick referred was probably the "Horse Express" or "Pony Express" which Peter Brannon encountered in early histories of Montgomery. Neil Blue, a local Montgomery historian long associated with the Montgomery Post Office, recorded that the "Horse Express" through Montgomery was established November 15, 1836. There were three lines out of Montgomery: one east to Columbus, Georgia; one north to Huntsville; and one south to Mobile. A one page letter from Montgomery to New York cost one dollar, and with three enclosures, weighing about an ounce, the charge was four dollars. The local rates, based on individual letters Brannon examined, were: Mobile to Montgomery, fifty-six and a quarter

cents; and Columbus to Montgomery, thirty-seven and a half cents. Major Ward Taylor of Greenville, at one time the owner of a tavern in Greenville, was the proprietor of the Montgomery-Mobile horse express and Robert Harwell of Montgomery owned the Montgomery-Columbus express.

A private "Pony Express" also operated between Montgomery and Mobile in the 1844-1846 era. John C. Riddle and David H. Carter founded their express to convey intelligence twenty-four hours ahead of the regular mail. The Post Office interpretation of the faster service was that the "Express" was "operating upon the markets of Mobile and New Orleans, in advance of the regular information of variations in the price of staple products in the northern and foreign markets" which was "in furious to the Post Office Department and the commercial interest generally." Thus the Post Office influenced the stage lines (who had mail contracts) to transmit the mail more quickly. To this end Wade Allen, one owner of the Montgomery-Mobile stage, had to follow the summer schedule, which allowed thirty-seven and a half hours on the Montgomery-Mobile run and thirty-six hours on the return trip, instead of the winter schedule (December-March) of forty-eight and forty-five hours respectively. The express survived this opposition, and one of the riders, Fred Tyler, on transmitting the news of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, made the Mobile to Montgomery run in twelve hours despite having to open the stables, and bridle and saddle his own horses (because he was ahead of time on the run). When a London newspaper doubted the feat, Riddle and Carter offered to bet ten thousand dollars that Tyler could make the trip in ten hours time. No one took the bet.

Alabama's "Pony Express" operated until shortly after the Mexican War when the telegraph line was completed from Montgomery to Mobile. Apparently the promoters of the St.

Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California, Pony Express of 1860 did not profit from the historical example of their Alabama predecessor, as they were "done in" by the same technological innovation in 1861.